2; Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

e. Women's work.

462 The women are constantly working. Getting up at cock-crow they pound paddy. When
512 day dawns, they plaster the court-yard with cowdung. Thereupon they draw and fetch
262 water. They next give the gruel that is left from the previous day to the men and children. When these have eaten, they themselves take food. Thereupon they make up fire and put the midday meal food on the fire; they cook the rice, make curry; they pin leaf-cups and leaf-plates, ladle out the cooked rice, and when it becomes noon, they give the men and children their midday meal and afterwards eat themselves. From noon to the second [283] time for drawing water (about 5 p. m.) they do different kinds of work, pluck vegetables, fetch leaves, and if they live near a forest, they go to fetch firewood, or they clear out the cotton seed in the *carkhi*[6], they clean the cotton with a bow[7], they make rolls of carded cotton on twigs, they spin on the spinning wheel, they wind the thread on their fingers, that the men may afterwards use it when weaving cloth. When it becomes the second time for drawing water, they go to fetch water, and then make preparations for the evening meal. Some two hours after it has become dark they eat. The women eat after the others. Meat they (i. e., all Santals) eat only now and then, mostly they eat cooked rice with vegetables and split peas. The spices for meat are turmeric, Anis seed, [263] garlic, oil, and salt. The spices for fish are turmeric and *mithi*[8], and oil and salt; for vegetables and split peas only salt. They talk together about different matters while inside, thereupon they lie down to sleep. At the time of sowing and harvesting the women plant rice, hoe the maize, and when the paddy is ripe, they reap it. At the time of Danâe they make the house and door smooth: so there, this is the work of the women.

f. Children's work and amusements.

857 Until they are able to tend cattle, small boys only run about and play. When they be-
233 come fit for being cattle-herds, they tend cattle, also sheep and goats, together with the
[234] other village boys. In the morning they let the cattle out, and they tend them, two or
[223] three companions going together. They blow the flute, they hunt birds. At noon they take the cattle to a place where they rest, that they may themselves get food. When they have eaten, they drive the cattle out to graze, and when it becomes evening, they bring
234 the cattle to the village and take them in. At noon grown-up people milk the cows; they give the milk to the children; what is left they keep and add to it day after day and make clarified butter of it. To make clarified butter they boil the milk; having boiled it they let it become curds; these they churn mixed with water; thereupon they skim off the

[6] See Dictionary s. v. [7] This bow is now fairly rare. It is made of bamboo; at one end, the end kept in the right hand, it is compact; the rest is split and bent and a catgut string is fixed so as to make it a bow. It is worked putting the bow-string down in the cotton and "playing" this with the thumb and index-finger of the left hand. [8] Trigonella Foenum-Graecum, L.

beans hoṛeć, raher, ghaṅgra, sutri; further alpaluṣ, vegetables, fowls, pigs, goats, hares, peafowls, the Indian Gaur, the Sambar Stag, birds, and the winged creation. And salt they were preparing from saline earth. They scrape off and bring some earth, mix it up in an earthenware pot and strain it with water; they boil the water, and when the water evaporates, the salt comes there. Because it is very pungent, they cover it up in a cloth and bury it in hot ashes; then it becomes tasty salt. They were preparing this during the cold season. Oil they were pressing out of different forest fruits; they were weaving clothes for themselves. People of the Ṭuḍu sept were making all kinds of implements of iron; and they were themselves making winnowing-fans and baskets, earthenware vessels, and so on. Whether we formerly had gold or not, we do not know; but in the old country they called gold samanom. Later on people of the Baske sept were transacting business, buying and selling by barter, and since rupees and pice have appeared, we buy and sell using money. Formerly also the village people were bartering, some bartered buffaloes for goats, some goats for pigs, and so on.

Nowadays people of both sexes have become very lazy; they do not press oil, neither do they prepare salt; they do not much weave cloth either; they buy everything; thereby we Santals are becoming poor, and we are becoming deeply involved in debt to the money-lenders.

v. About debts and loans.

In former times no people were getting into debt or taking loans from the money-lenders; and there were no money-lenders either. In the Sikhar country the money-lenders found us for the first time. There the first money-lender with the Santals lived in Nanduṣṛa. From that time up to now we are in their hands, and they are tearing us up like vultures. By constantly paying we become numb; still the debt never comes to an end. They say: "If a seer has come into the house, it will never get out again"; "a Deko usurer, an old hyena, even old bones they crunch". Really it was also due to hardship in connexion with these that we ran away from Sikhar. At first they did not unrighteously charge us interest to such a degree; they were taking only 25 pct., in paddy or money; but gradually they commenced to charge exorbitantly. For a debt of three or four rupees they would without justice or reason drive pair after pair of plough-cattle away, and if you remonstrated with them, they would at once commence to strike.

But there is fault also on our side. Foolishly the Santals run into the hands of the usurers; whether they will be able to pay back or not, this they do not think of, and when they have what is needed to pay with, they will not pay at once; consequently interest upon interest is heaped up; thereupon the money-lender comes and carries all and everything away. And in the present age many Santals also deceitfully cheat the usurers and money-lenders of what is their right.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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462 512 go with their cattle to look after their agriculture. [264] It is about 9 a.m. that they can think of a breakfast, when the women convey to the fields a plate of [262] "Bàsiàm damari" (*rice soaked in water and kept over-night*) which they eat with relish with a pinch of [263] salt and some "sang" (*fried leaves*) generally of "sajina" leaves. Now refreshed with a meal, they work on till midday. The women are in the meantime busy with the hearth, cook and clean the yards and houses with cow-dung. The men return from [264] the fields at noon and bathe and eat their noon-day meal, again of soaked rice and "sang." Now the [515] women can think of their food and this they take [264] after a bath and after the men have dined, exactly [171] like their Hindu sisters. It is now time for men to take some rest. They loll on "parkòms" (*stringed bed-steads*) and doze for a time and are off to their fields at about 2 p.m. in the afternoon. There they [517] dig, plough or sow till 4 p.m., and after returning from the fields go round the villages, visiting friends or indulge themselves in village sports. Meanwhile, [264] their wives cook their supper, draw water and husk paddy and again at about 5-30 p.m., the family take dinner, the same menu being repeated. The children are fed first, the men next, the women, last of all.

With evening, the Santals as a tribe shut themselves indoors. If you ask them, "Why do you retire so early?" They will perhaps answer with a bland

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"dumbu pitha," is shaped like eggs with powdered rice, treacle and salt. It was explained to us that in the process of baking an earthen pot has to be placed on an oven with water. The cake is then placed on a miniature bamboo basket and simmered in steam.

Various kinds of edible leaves are eaten by the Santals, among them "Siñ aṛak'" (A small tree, *Bauhinia Purpurea*, Linn., the leaves of which are eaten as a pot-herb), "Purai aṛak'," (Beng. Pui sang, *Basella Alba*, Linn.) "Kedok' aṛak'" (The supper pot-herb, *Argyreia speciosa*, Sweet; Oriya, Kendo sang), "Maṭha aṛak'" (A pot-herb, *Antidesma Diandrum*, Tulas; Oriya, *Khata*) and "Mungà aṛak'" (Horse-radish leaves, *Moringa pterygosperma*, Gaertn.) deserve mention. These are generally boiled in water and eaten with salt, and as an occasional luxury fried with "mohua" oil. The Santal, we learnt, has no relish for mustard oil, the favourite culinary recipe of the Bengalis. Besides, they eat various kinds of flowers like "mohua," (*Bassia Latifolia*), Horse-radish (Bengali, *sajina*), "Kohṇḍa baha" (pumpkin flower, *Cucurbita moschata*, *Duchsne*) fried with "mohua" oil when available, or boiled simply in water. They do not use spices or even turmeric in the preparation of these flower dishes, the exception being garlic, onion and pepper.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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FOOD

262 The Santals eat almost everything. They generally live on vegetable diet because they cannot afford to eat meat often, but when they get meat they eat too much. Their staple food is rice which is prepared in the following way. They put rice into an earthen vessel containing a sufficient amount of water and is boiled, a plate is put on the top of vessel to keep the steam within, which causes the mass to be evenly cooked.

Besides boiled rice, the Santals eat parched rice which they call 'Khajari'. They put some sand in a broken or shallow earthen vessel and place it over the fire-place. They sprinkle some salted water on the rice which is to be fried, and mix it properly. Some of the rice they then place over the heated sand and stir it with a few broom sticks of coconut leaves. When the rice properly swells, they take it out of the sand, and eat it smeared with mustard oil or with molasses.

From rice they prepare cake, the local name of which is 'Pitha'. They have got a large number of varieties. Rev. P. O. Bodding in his memoir on "How Santals Live" has given a detailed description of all the varieties. A few I am quoting here from his writing :-

"JEL PITHA", meat cake. Sun-dried paddy is husked and cleaned, soaked in water for a little while, then dried and made into a coarse flour and sifted. The flesh is cut into small bits. Turmeric, pepper and other spices and salt are ground fine. All is well kneaded and mixed into the flour, that has been moistened. The whole is then pressed down on a leaf-plate. Another leaf-plate is with the help of

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262 (3) Mug (Phaseolus Mungo Linn.).
(4) Musuri (Lens esculanta Moench.).

262 263 252 The Santals prepare curry with different vegetables which they collect from the jungle or they produce in their own kitchen garden. Potato is rarely used by them. From the jungle they collect certain edible roots, leaves and mushrooms, and with them they prepare curry. Pumpkins, sweet potato, brinjals, jhinga, ladies finger, beans, radishes, and onions are used by the Santals for curry.

262 The Santals eat various types of fruits, the most common are the followings :- jack fruit, guava, plantain, black berry, tamarind, papaw, etc.

The Santals relish animal food very much. They eat the meat of almost all birds and animals with the exception of tiger, leopard, horse, monkey, dog, mole, eagle, hawk, some types of frog, elephant and cat. They are very fond of the meat of pig, young crow, mouse, and hare.

231 They kill pigs in the following way:-

252 They let out their dogs to catch a pig which runs hither and thither on being frightened. They then shoot arrows at the pig. When it falls on the ground, they strike it on its head with a big stone. After it dies, they burn it in the fire, and when all the hair of its body is burnt, they cut it into pieces and cook it.
252 Birds are similarly treated to remove the feathers.
262 Fishes are eaten mostly as curry. Now coming in
262 contact with the Hindus of the neighbouring areas, the
177 Santals have ceased to eat meat of many animals.